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## ROBOT BOMBS POSE GRAVE ETHICAL PROBLEM FOR FUTURE

GERMANY'S robot bomb attacks on Britain, whose effects were surveyed by Prime Minister Churchill in a forthright and eloquent speech of July 6 to the House of Commons, have thrown into sharp relief two aspects of the war that tend to be overshadowed by elation over Allied successes in Normandy and Russia's rapid advances toward the German border. First, these attacks indicate that, as modern warfare becomes more and more mechanized, it is also bound to become more and more indiscriminate. Technically—but not morally—it is but a step from the bombardier in a plane, who, by pushing a button, can discharge a cargo of deadly bombs on targets he can see only in the large, inevitably killing many innocent civilians who happen to be within bombing range and whom he never actually sees, to the blind mechanical device of the robot bomb, where human decision stops at the launching of the weapon, leaving the rest to horrible chance.

BLIND WARFARE. This killing in the void, without visible objectives, which frees the killer, at his remote controls, of the guilt complex that in the past has haunted sensitive men recalling the faces and groans of their victims, is the gruesome *reductio ad absurdum* of war. No responsible person has ever claimed that the process of destroying human beings through war is a humane process. Yet many well-intentioned reformers have sought to humanize war—as if the effects of a conflagration, once it is under way, could somehow be moderated and reduced to manageable proportions. Today all of us must feel like the managers of the Hartford circus. Through a long train of circumstances—negligence and indifference on the part of some, careless or wilful action on the part of others—humanity has permitted an unspeakable disaster to occur.

What is equally disturbing, robot bombs, once the deadly formula has been devised, can be manufactured with relative ease and at relatively low cost by

any nation possessing industrial facilities. Industrialization, which if constructively used could spell such great material progress, thus threatens to become more than ever the potential breeding-ground of still greater and greater catastrophes. Yet surely the answer to this man-made problem is not to raze industrial plants, as some suggest be done in the case of defeated Germany. The answer is to uproot the will of some human beings to inflict such suffering on fellowmen, to destroy the desire to fight wars and, most important of all, to deprive individuals who aspire to leadership of their nations of the possibility of plunging these nations into conflicts their own peoples may dread and oppose. How to accomplish this manifold task is the most crucial ethical and political problem of our times.

POISON OF NAZI TERROR. This problem is bound to be greatly complicated by the very brutality of the Germans as their hour of reckoning approaches. This is the second aspect of the robot bomb attacks that is already casting a shadow over the future. For it becomes increasingly clear that the Nazi leaders, before they go down to defeat, will do their utmost to destroy everything they can, in the hope of either frightening their opponents into a compromise peace or, if that fails, of leaving such devastation, human and material, in their wake, as to make the task of reconstruction seemingly hopeless. We already know, from what happened in all conquered countries, that the Nazis are determined to extirpate systematically the men and women of character, talent and courage who would have been able to rehabilitate their respective peoples after the war. Now Americans who entered Rome have had an opportunity to see at close range the customary Nazi handiwork—the brutal killing, by hired thugs, of promising leaders among the young generation of Italy. It is well that some of us have seen these things, have learned for ourselves—not through hear-

say—the full horror of the way in which the Nazis go about the job of eliminating all who possess a spark of courage or intelligence. Every human society has dregs. But it remained for the Nazis to raise the dregs of every occupied country to positions, not of honor, but of power—sheer, untrammelled power to work evil blindly, just like the robot bombs.

**WHAT IS THE ANTIDOTE?** Having seen all this, what can we, among the United Nations, do about it? The immediate, the utterly natural reaction, is to demand an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. No one doubts that acts of terrible retaliation will be committed against the Germans by the peoples of the liberated countries—and every effort must be made to eliminate Nazi leaders, high and low, who ordered acts of brutality and coerced others into perpetrating them. But retaliation cannot in and of itself contribute to reconstruction. Nothing that the Allies can possibly do to the Germans will bring back to life the millions who have perished on battle-fields or in concentration camps, or erase memories of agony and terror from the minds of those who survive. On the contrary, protracted revenge would act as a poison left in the world's blood-stream by the Nazis—a poison that would circulate long after their defeat, and add an element of ultimate despair to the other horrors of war.

The only antidote for this poison is an effort to revive old beliefs and implant new convictions concerning the possibility of decent relations between human beings. Today, in Europe, such beliefs and convictions come from two groups which, dissimilar as they may seem, have in common a strong organization, a coherent philosophy of life, and the ingrained habit of obedience to instructions from on top. These two groups are the Catholics and the Communists. The useful role they can play when they decide to

collaborate is already evident in Italy. The Italian Communists, far from displaying the anti-clerical tendencies expected of them, advocate friendly relations with the Vatican. There are some indications that the Vatican may consider favorably a *modus vivendi* with the Soviet government which has not only encouraged the revival of the Orthodox Church in Russia, but on July 9 announced strict new rules about divorce, and fresh efforts to enhance the position and growth of the family. Meanwhile, in Britain the Church of England has exercised a leadership similar to that of the Catholic Church and has furthered an understanding with Russia.

It is, in a sense, a sad commentary on the position of liberals in this crisis that leaders of the future usually do not spring from their ranks. The new leaders, in fact, sometimes seem rather grim and frightening to liberals, because they seek some form of control rather than return to untrammelled freedom. Although seemingly conservative, these new leaders do not intend to build a replica of past institutions and practices. Indiscriminate return to the past would mean return to the very elements of conflict and disintegration that facilitated Hitler's conquest of Europe. What liberals must understand as they re-evaluate the past and weigh the future, is that we cannot approach Europe with ready-made blueprints or artificially created mechanisms of international relations into which suffering, distraught human beings must be fitted somehow or other. We must start by considering the needs of these human beings; first of all—their hunger of mind and soul as well as body. Only by restoring the value and integrity of the individual can we hope to combat, eventually, both the military and moral implications of such measures as robot bombing.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

## MONETARY TALKS REVEAL NEED FOR BROAD ECONOMIC AGREEMENT

The United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference in session at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, from July 1 to 20 has brought together the representatives of 44 governments to consider two proposals: an international stabilization fund, and a world reconstruction and development bank. While the agenda is concerned specifically with the monetary and investment field, Secretary Morgenthau reminded the delegates when he accepted the presidency of the conference that "it should be viewed as part of a broader program of agreed action among nations to bring about the expansion of production, employment and trade contemplated in the Atlantic Charter and in Article VII of the mutual aid agreements concluded by the United States with many of the United Nations." Plans for such institutions have been studied in detail for more than a year following the original statements prepared for the British and American Treasuries by Lord Keynes

and Dr. Harry White, respectively.

**CONFERENCE MEETS DIFFICULTIES.** The draft agreement under discussion at the present conference was issued on April 21 and in itself represents a wide area of agreement.\* But serious difficulties have arisen during the negotiations which may delay concrete action beyond the appointed closing date of July 20. The principal controversy concerns the apportionment of national quotas to the proposed \$8,000,000,000 fund, but the use of gold and the problem of large blocked balances, especially those built up by various countries in London during the war have also proved perplexing. The usual bargaining for seats on a nine-member executive committee which is to be set up has also taken place. It is generally agreed that such a conference was feasible at this time only because of the technical nature of

\* "Currency Plan—A Step Toward Recovery of World Trade," *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, May 12, 1944.

the subject, and it may be assumed that the above difficulties can be solved in due course in so far as they are technical in character. But the problem of providing the larger quota demanded by the U.S.S.R., or making a proper adjustment that would be satisfactory to British authorities for the conversion of India's huge credits into other than sterling currencies if necessary, reflect, in part, more serious objections which have been raised to the plans for currency stability.

**OBJECTION TO THE FUND.** In England there has been much Parliamentary criticism of the decision to proceed with this matter at all before the more general lines of policy relative to international trade have been clarified. This argument has real cogency, and some American criticism of the proposed currency agreement has been based upon it, although never articulated here as clearly as in Britain. For the most part, however, much of the disapproval which has been voiced in the American press since the opening of the conference suggests that minor divergences are being invoked to impede the progress of the negotiations.

Thus the counter-proposal contained in a letter to the *New York Times* of June 21, signed by twenty-one Republican members of the House, advocated that, instead of having this country participate in a joint undertaking with other powers, Congress create an American Reconstruction Fund to carry out the purpose of the proposed international fund. This is a suggestion for unilateral action that indicates a

return to the policies pursued in the early inter-war years when no thought of tariff reductions or adequate supply of dollars was contemplated. The same may be said for the fear expressed in many quarters that the American quota is too large—again reflecting either a desire to have this country play a lone hand, or a refusal to recognize the predominant position the United States has come to play in international economic life. Were the broader economic policies which the United States must follow clearly understood, such criticism might not arise.

**FURTHER CLARIFICATION NEEDED.** On the domestic plane these various objections reveal the need for further clarification on the part of the American public concerning the nature of the commitments it may wish to support in the post-war era. On the international plane the difficulties encountered at Bretton Woods are but different reflections of the same problems which face the United Nations in almost every field of post-war organization. Although the war is drawing to a close—a fact which as Mr. White has said, "has increased the pressure for early action" since "all countries recognize the need of having some constructive monetary plan ready to put into operation after the war ends"—the difficulties which have hampered smooth negotiations at the conference suggest the overwhelming need for an overall international agreement about future political and economic relations. If such were achieved, it would greatly facilitate the adjustment of technical problems by the technical experts.

GRANT S. McCLELLAN

## SOME RECENT BOOKS ON THE FAR EAST

*The People of India*, by Kumar Goshal. New York, Sheridan House, 1944. \$3.00

An Indian student approaches the history and problems of his country from a new angle—the life of the people. At the same time he brings into his story outstanding political developments from ancient times down to the failure of the Cripps mission. A very valuable book.

*The Making of Modern China: A Short History*, by Owen and Eleanor Lattimore. New York, Norton, 1944. \$2.50

One of the best brief accounts of present-day China and its background. The subject is a complicated one, but the authors' broad knowledge and feeling for key trends permit them to generalize and simplify with great skill.

*Journey from the East*, by Mark J. Gayn. New York, Knopf, 1944. \$3.75

An editor of *Time* magazine furnishes a vivid, highly informative account of his life in the Far East and the United States. Beginning with his boyhood in the Manchurian timberland, Mr. Gayn takes the reader through the Russian and Chinese revolutions and the recent years of Japanese aggression. The result is a well-written, significant analysis presented in personal terms, but revealing clearly the meaning of the times.

*Japan: Its Resources and Industries*, by Clayton D. Carus and Charles L. McNichols. New York, Harper, 1944. \$3.50

Written especially for "the many thousands of young Americans who will ultimately be trained for post-war Pacific and Asiatic administrative and occupational tasks," this book is a concise, highly informative discussion of the main aspects of Japan's geographical and economic position.

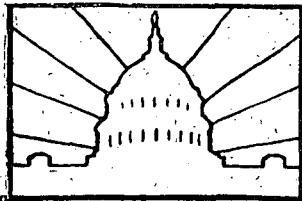
*Voices from Unoccupied China*, by Liu Nai-chen, Tsai Chiao, C. K. Chu, J. Heng Liu, Fei Hsiao-tung, Wu Ching-chao, Chin Yueh-lin. Edited by Harley Farnsworth MacNair. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1944. \$1.50

A group of visiting Chinese scholars discuss problems of government, nutrition, public health, social relations, economic reconstruction and education. The views expressed—as the editor points out in a stimulating introduction—are "diplomatic," i.e. they generally conform to the official Chungking approach to China's problems and skirt the debatable aspects of present-day China. Nevertheless, this is a valuable work because it gives the reader a genuine feeling for the life and problems of a country that has gone through seven years of war.

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# Washington News Letter



## DE GAULLE VISIT PROMOTES UNDERSTANDING

Relations between the French Committee of National Liberation and the British government have become increasingly friendly since General Charles de Gaulle, its president, conferred with Prime Minister Churchill at Marrakesh last January 12. On February 8 the British government announced that it had reached a financial and mutual aid agreement with the Committee, and on June 19 it opened negotiations in London with Committee representatives for an agreement on the civil administration of France during the period of liberation. This agreement has been concluded, but United States approval is needed before it can become effective.

**WHY DE GAULLE CAME TO WASHINGTON.** The strong British disposition to find a basis of cooperation with the French Committee was responsible in some measure for the arrival in Washington on July 6 of General de Gaulle, whose relations with the United States government have been marked in the past by considerable tension. Britain encouraged President Roosevelt to invite de Gaulle here, and urged de Gaulle not only to accept the invitation but to visit Washington in a friendly and conciliatory spirit. Other factors contributing toward the visit have been the progress of the Allied armies in France and the discovery that de Gaulle and the Committee have a large popular following in that part of France which the Allied armies have freed.

The talks which General de Gaulle had in Washington with President Roosevelt, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, and American military leaders, have probably laid the foundation for as firm a relationship with the United States as the Committee has with Britain. De Gaulle created a favorable impression in Washington. He had discarded the haughty manner and uncooperative attitude which irritated President Roosevelt when he first met the general at Casablanca in January 1943. "I am happy to be on American soil," he said at his arrival, "to meet President Roosevelt and to meet those who are relentlessly fighting with us. . . . The whole French people are thinking of you and salute you, Americans, our friends. . . . Our ardent desire is that the United States and France shall work together in every way as they are now fighting together, for victory."

General de Gaulle came to Washington with the understanding that he was not to request recognition of the Committee as the Provisional Government of France and that President Roosevelt would not ac-

cord such recognition, although the Committee has long claimed it indirectly and directly. On November 24, 1943 de Gaulle told the Consultative Assembly in Algiers that "the Committee is in fact the government of the French Republic." On April 4 he said that "the powers appertaining to the Prime Minister [of France] are exercised by the President of the Committee of National Liberation." On May 15 the Consultative Assembly adopted a resolution that the Committee was to be known as "the Provisional Government of the French Republic."

Although de Gaulle was not boastful here, persons with whom he talked during his Washington stay have the impression he is confident that the French people would choose him as their leader in any election, and this confidence apparently led him to abandon insistence on United States' approval of the action taken by the Consultative Assembly on May 15. Henceforth relations between the Committee and the United States are expected to develop on a friendly basis—with the understanding that, as Mr. Hull said on April 9, the United States is disposed to see the French Committee exercise leadership to establish law and order under General Dwight D. Eisenhower, but also wants the French people at the earliest opportunity to exercise its sovereign will freely by choosing its own government.

**FRANCO-BRITISH DRAFT AGREEMENT.** The draft agreement concluded by Britain with de Gaulle reflects this general policy. It is similar in some respects to agreements which Britain signed, with United States approval, on May 16 with the exiled governments of the Netherlands, Belgium and Norway. It provides for collaboration between Allied military leaders and the French Committee in the administration of liberated areas. Unlike the agreements with the three governments, it does not provide that matters of state are to be placed ultimately in the hands of the Committee: that would be tantamount to recognition. President Roosevelt himself negotiated no agreement with de Gaulle, but the Washington conversations created an understanding on which a future agreement can be based. This understanding enabled the General to disclose at his press conference on July 10 that he intended to move his capital from Algiers to territory in metropolitan France at an early date.

BLAIR BOLLES

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